

Settler-Colonial Economics in Canada
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There is a serious issue within economics education. It does not reflect reality anymore. American studies have demonstrated that the overall pedagogy of economics does not match what economists do (Colander, 2005), and lacks plurality in its curriculum (Reardon, 2009), and that it still relies on historical specificity (Schiffman, 2004). Hence, the economics pedagogy seems to be temporally stuck, making it lose its relevancy to political contexts and the evolution of knowledge in other sciences. The popular ‘Open Letter’¹ (A-E, 2000) from French university students demonstrated the general frustrations of young economists with regards to economics education. They briefly elaborate three main reasons representing their discontentment: (1) lack of empirical work, (2) uncontrolled usage of mathematics, and finally (3) pedagogical dogmatism (A-E, 200, p.2).

Economics students with revolutionary ambitions can feel very discouraged by the economics framework taught in the classrooms. While many of us want “to end global poverty, to solve the food crisis” and “to overcome [climate change]” (Reardon, 2009), the economics curriculum only trains us reproduce the current system and generate fixes, instead of impactful transformations. As the world changes, so should our education, so should the diversity in the economics pedagogy.

Heterodox economics is not a new idea. In this essay, I describe four other alternative economics frameworks, such as ecological, Marxist, feminist, and anti-racist economics. The first three frameworks currently have a well-developed academic presence, considering the peer-reviewed journals that cover those topics. On the other hand, economists do not delve into the axis of racism. The lack of the axis' presence in the discipline delegitimizes the reality (and impacts) of racism in economics. There are many other axes of oppression (not discussed here) that should as well be presented to economics students.

There is another very relevant and crucial economic aspect in Canada’s economy that is often misconstrued, even forgotten, in economics pedagogy. Settler-colonialism (and colonialism) can help students learn about the very beginning of the Canadian

¹ English translation of ‘Lettre Ouverte’.

economy and its persistent need for more land, and to commodify nature. However, that topic is left out in economics textbooks. In fact, Tom Green (2012) mentions that economics textbooks do not discuss about the stolen accumulated wealth from Indigenous nations.

In this paper, I delve into the following question: ‘How can settler-colonialism inform the theories of Canadian economics pedagogy?’ Not only would settler-colonialism inform economics, it would also completely transform its pedagogy. Before digging into the question, I will examine what economics students are reading and learning in Canada, through an overview of Canadian economics textbooks. As discussed earlier, what follows the survey of textbooks is a chapter on ecological economics and anti-oppression economics. Finally, I extend Mel Watkins’ Staple Thesis (1963) as the starting point for an educational platform on settler-colonialism in economics. This will serve to rectify the economics students’ misapprehension of Indigenous land rights. Afterwards, I conclude with a discussion on pedagogical neo-liberalism, and on other economic aspects of settler-colonialism.

Overview of Canadian Economics Textbooks

An economics textbook is an extensive academic and resourceful book intended for students learning about economics. Usually, its table of contents covers topics from macroeconomics, microeconomics, finance, international trade, policy, and recently some textbooks discuss about the environment. Although most economics textbooks are sourced from the United States, there are at least twenty versions adapted for the Canadian context. In order to grasp how the concept of wealth is taught in university classrooms across Canada, Canadian economics textbooks are valuable portals to conduct content and discourse analyses. At the present moment, the amount of critical research on Canadian economics education is very low. Nevertheless, the existing research presents an interesting trend in the development of Canadian economics education and its textbooks in Canada.

High School Economics Textbooks

In Canada, economics has been a compulsory high school discipline over the past twenty-nine to thirty-four years (Brooks et al., 1991, p.81). One may also wonder, what is the origin of the economics textbook? For Tom Green² (2012, p.190), all standard economics textbooks are based upon a classic text published in 1948 by Paul A. Samuelson³. In those days, the “global economy was smaller” and environmental issues (e.g. climate change) were not given as much importance as today (Green, 2012, p.190). Moreover, considering the fact that it was a post-WWII text, we can suggest that the content of Samuelson’s text was written within the context of a welfare state and the “Golden Age of Capitalism”, where governments were much more implicated in their national economies in order to increase economic growth within their borders.

The results from Brooks et al. (1991), present a slightly similar story about the dominant economic doctrines taught in Canadian high schools. The authors use Daniel Moynihan’s thesis (Moynihan, 1975) to explain that the 1947 British revolution still influences the Canadian high school economics curriculum. In short, the Moynihan thesis states that the nations which gained independence from the British Empire “developed their policies in terms of the general corpus of British socialist thought” (Brooks et al., 1991, p.82). After conducting an analysis of six introductory economics textbooks, Brooks et al. (1991) extend the latter thesis to demonstrate that the textbooks are strongly dedicated to Keynesian theory (i.e. demand-side economics), leaving out supply-side theories. Moreover, they suggest that the textbooks have a stronger theme of socialism than of capitalism (Brooks et al., 1991). While the authors possibly had a strong case about fourteen years ago, their position loses grip within the context of 21st century university economics.

Brooks and Kelebay (1991) are suspicious of the anti-capitalist economics trend in the Canadian textbooks. Consequently, they are worried that the biased curriculum would generate un-productive and un-creative young citizens. The authors assertively conclude,

² Tom Green is a Canadian ecological economist.

³ Paul Anthony Samuelson (1915-2009): an American economist who won the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences

If we are correct in seeing economic education in Canada and elsewhere as being *dominated by socialist values*, then we cannot think we are educating students who will contribute to a productive economy as a result of that education (Brooks et al., 1991, p.94) (author's emphasis)

University Economics Textbooks

Tom Green (2012) surveyed eight introductory economics textbooks used in (and outside of) British Columbia (Canada) university curriculums to depict how topics related to the environment and sustainability are taught in economics courses. His methodology made it possible to quantitatively record and weight economics textbook content and to provide statistics about how the latter topics are addressed to Canadian economics students. For example, Tom Green (2012) searched for environmental keywords and economic discussions around environmental issues and sustainability. The author found a small percentage of the latter mentioned topics within the surveyed textbooks (Green, 2012). On average, only about 3.2% of the surveyed textbooks address “the environment-economy linkages” or has any content “significant to sustainability” (Green, 2012, p.213). More specifically, the aforementioned average number is 0.16 percentile points higher in the case of the five surveyed textbooks used in British Columbia's universities (Green, 2012, p.196). On the other hand, based on Green (2012, p.196), the other three economics textbooks not used in the province have a much lower representation of environmental topics, at 2.8%. Moreover, contrary to the earlier analysis of high school textbooks (Brooks et al., 1991), the growth imperative is advocated as “society's primary macroeconomic policy objective” in the textbooks surveyed by Green (2012, p.213). Finally, with a strong focus on enhancing market mechanisms, economics textbooks leave environmental issues aside as externalities that can be fixed by ameliorating market efficiency (Green, 2012).

Identity Crisis of Economics

We already covered the conclusion that high school economics students may become “socialist products” because of the economics textbooks (Brooks et al., 1991). Consequently, they will then also possibly become “capitalist products” after studying

university grade economics. Hence, could we say that the student's identity would take its pre-high school form after taking an economics course in university? In other words, would the economics student then turn into an advocate for capitalism after university? Clearly the answer is complex since there are no indications as to what the students' prior (or reverse) character was before they started reading the high school economics textbook. Plus, children probably do not think about their preferred economic leaning before high school. If we forgo the latter complications, we can jump to suggest that the content within Canadian university economics textbooks is the opposite of their high school counterpart. Hence, the socialist-bias in the high school textbooks, emphasized by Brooks et al. (1991), is possibly a significant influence in the early development of the student's identity, but it is definitely less significant in the long term. A high school student in Canada takes less/reads less economics courses/textbooks in their twelve years of high school education than an economics undergraduate (major and minor) does in about three to four years of university education. Based on Green's (2012) analysis, students who take an introductory economics course (or *alas* complete a major or minor economics degree) from a Canadian university will have an "unsustainable" and market-oriented perspective of the economy. The allure of this conclusion takes an interesting turn when we consider the fact that "about 40% of first-year students in North America study economics at the introductory level" (Green, 2012, p.190). In other words, "over one million students" every year (Green, 2012, p.190) are potentially influenced by the economics textbook and its ideologies about society.

The research performed by Iida et al. (2011) would disagree with Brooks and Kelebay's (1991) aforementioned conclusion. Iida and Oda (2011) present a list of academic articles from the United States that disproves the warning from Brooks et al. (1991). In general, all of the listed research state that the selfish character of the student appears due to the influence of "studying and considering mainly the view of the rational decision making" in economics (Iida et al., 2011, p.234). Hence, the "less-cooperative" behavior of economics students from American universities, described by several studies (Iida et al, 2011), depicts an alternative description of how the discipline affects the students' identity. Although the economics student is possibly much more selfish than

other students, they are not “thieves” *per se*, since they will still abide to the protection of property rights (Yezer et al., 1996, cited in Iida et al., 2011, p.235).

Brooks et al. (1991) may be a much older article describing past textbooks, but a later study was performed which (indirectly) confirms the author’s use of the Moynihan theory. Levy et al. (2011) surveyed American economics textbooks within the period of 1960 to 1980. The authors found that the books were overestimating the growth of the Soviet Union, even though it eventually collapsed (Levy et al., 2011). If we remember well, the Soviet Union was an openly communist/socialist country. Hence, if the early economics textbooks in North America *did* over-exaggerate the success of the Soviet Union, then it presents a clear and relatively recent support for the results of Brooks et al. (1991). Nonetheless, we cannot apply this conclusion in the 21st century since the textbooks studied by Brooks et al. (1991) are much older. Further research on current economics textbooks addressed to Canadian high school students must be conducted to better describe and theorize the ideological trend in pre-university economics education in Canada. Additionally, the methodology of Green (2012) could be applied to survey the economics textbooks used by Brooks et al. (1991) to determine whether earlier textbooks were much shorter on environmental discussions than the present textbooks.

Based on Brooks et al. (1991, p.88), supply-side economists state that there is a lack of a theory about wealth production in Keynesian economics. Additionally, the authors notice that there is “virtually” no explanation about the production of wealth within the studied economics textbooks (Brooks, et al., 1991, p.92). Green (2012) contends that the main perspective of the university textbooks is through the theory of choice (Green, 2012), which consequently influences the discussion around wealth. It was the British economist Lionel Robbins (1898-1984) who proposed the definition of economics as the “science of choice”, which was later adopted by the influential Samuelson economics textbook (Schiffman, 2004, p.1086).

The lens of choice results in the textbook’s content and the students’ attention being heavily weighted towards issues of market exchanges, price formation and to exploring the implications of marginal changes (Green, 2012, p.200).

Although Tom Green's (2012) results do not perfectly resemble Brooks' et al. (1991), both studies are then possibly just complimentary to each other. We need to understand that the two articles have different date ranges within the selection of their respective textbooks. While the textbooks used in Green (2012) are dated from 2005 to 2008, Brooks' et al. (1991) surveyed books date range is from 1979 to 1985, which gives a difference of 20 to 29 years. This large gap demonstrates that the textbooks were written in different temporal contexts. In fact, the textbooks used by Brooks et al. (1991) were approximately during the 1960 to 1980 period in which Soviet growth was celebrated and overestimated in American textbooks (Levy et al., 2011), supporting the results of Brooks et al. (1991). Moreover, this was also around the same time period in which economics was formally introduced as a subject in Canadian high schools (Brooks et al., 1991, p.85).

We can arguably conclude that the older Canadian economics textbooks had a socialist tone, while the recent textbooks instead tend towards a pro-market orientation (i.e. capitalist) with not enough content on environmental matters. However, to make matters more complicated, both Brooks et al. (1991), and Green (2012) agree that economics textbooks stand by the 'theory of choice' and the 'theory of convergence'. In Brooks et al. (1991, p.87) the authors point out that the economics textbooks describe the Canadian economy where capitalism and socialism converge "into a common system". From their research, the 1979-1985 economics textbooks had a strong Keynesian agenda (Brooks et al., 1991, p.90). In the case of Green (2012, p.214), although the "textbooks present the 'limits to growth' debate" and "set out favoured economic tools that might be used to reduce economic activity", the theory of convergence is not as obvious in the survey of Tom Green's 2005-2008 economics textbooks. Therefore, in addition to the possible capitalist trend in Canadian economics textbooks over time, the content of the textbooks constantly oscillate between two opposing degrees of ideologies, from left to right. In this manner, there is an identity crisis in the pedagogy of economics that needs to be further discussed in the classroom. The imperative that I am suggesting is that economics students must learn about the economy, and not simply be trained as neo-liberal technocrats.

Alternative Economics: Ecological Economics & Anti-Oppression Economics

Instead of pretending that economics students are ready for the world connected by events such as globalization and climate change, the economics discipline needs regrounding. The study of economics requires an updated vision about reality. There are at least two alternative studies of economics, which I will briefly present. First of all, ecological economics presents itself as the most reasoned alternative to neoclassical⁴ economics. The second section describes a variety of anti-oppression economics, which deal with classism, sexism/gender, and racism. The following presentation will exhibit the alternative and heterodox pedagogies that the economics discipline requires in order to better inform young economists of our globalized society.

Ecological Economics

Ecological economics is a rapidly disseminating and expanding perspective of economics. As per its title, it mainly covers the topic of the environment. Despite the focus, the diversity of its content is becoming sizable to current neoclassical economics. The ecological economics movement started around the 1970s with Georgescu Rogen and his inclusion of thermodynamic laws into the discipline, going against the usual mechanical analysis of neoclassical economics (G-R, 1975). His curiosity and determination inspired other economics students to understand the limits to the economy. Many agree that ecological economics is defined by its basic understanding that the economy is a subsystem operating within an even large biophysical system that “contains and sustains it” (Costanza et al. 1997, cited by Malghan, 2014, p.2261). Thereon, the discipline focused on what ecological economists advance as three important pillars: scale, allocation and distribution, within certain efficiency parameters (Malghan, 2014).

With regards to the concept of wealth, Tom Green (2012) argues that economics textbooks do not discuss about how wealth is accumulated. For Green (2012, p.200) wealth accumulation occurs through the “liquidation of natural resources”, or through the dispossession of lands from Indigenous people. As discussed earlier, the textbooks instead focus on the theory of choice, and of preference, since the distribution of wealth

⁴ Usually, the adjective “neoclassical” and “neoliberal” are both very similar, since they both prioritize market mechanisms in our societies. However, the former adjective is much more appropriate to the history of economics, as it builds from Adam Smith’s legacy.

“is assumed as given” (Green, 2012, p.200). Hence, we would expect the top ecological economics textbook written by Herman Daly⁵ (Daly et al., 2011) to provide a segment as to how wealth is accumulated. The answer can be found through the definition of economics provided by the ecological economics textbook:

Economics is the study of **allocation** of limited, or scarce, resources among alternative competing end (Daly et al., 2011, p.3).

Although the footnote to this definition is critical of the idea of scarcity, Daly et al. (2011) seem to stay within the general definition of economics. However, the difference of the term *allocation* between neoclassical and ecological economics is a defining feature of ecological economics. While the market is the only mechanism for allocation in neoclassical economics, ecological economics recognizes the market as one of the many possible mechanisms for allocation (Daly et al., 2011, p.3). Although the latter definition of economics is clearly critical of neoclassical economics, the ecological economics textbook’s definition does not question how resources are accumulated.

In the *From Hunter-Gatherer to Industrialist* paragraph from the textbook, the authors mention that wealth accumulation was “impractical and absent for most of human existence” (Daly et al., 2011, p.9) and they mention how it lead to surplus production, which allowed for a “greater division of labour and specialization” (ibid). In other words, wealth accumulation (and private property) engendered our present capitalist society. If we return to Tom Green’s brief explanation of wealth accumulation, the ecological economics textbook (Daly et al., 2011) is the most appropriate economics textbook depicting the many impacts of the “liquidation of natural resources”. In other words, the discussion within the ecological economics textbook goes beyond the question of allocation, by depicting how the economy affects planet Earth and by proposing different theories and methodologies to study the environment-economy relationship.

Finally, while ecological economics does present a pedagogical analysis of the consequences of wealth accumulation on the environment, young Canadian economics students still cannot fully understand the implications of wealth accumulation in Canada. The second component of Tom Green’s aforementioned wealth accumulation definition

⁵ Herman Daly is an ecological economist, who is also considered as the disciple of Georgescu Rogen.

is extremely necessary to consider in Canada. In the following pages, I argue that the axes of oppression, such as settler-colonialism, cannot be absent in the study of economics and should be provisioned as a crucial basis for economics education.

Anti-Oppression Economics: Three Axes

Another interesting economics perspective connects Marxism, feminism and anti-racism theory. This analysis is seemingly much more radical, and therefore much less accepted by institutional decision-makers. While Marxist and feminist economics are common and have peer-reviewed academic journals (e.g. *Rethinking Marxism* and *Feminist Economics*, respectively), anti-racist economics is a much less discussed topic. In fact, it is easy to assume that neoclassical economists would argue that the topic of “race” does not fit within the general economics curriculum. In the late 1990s, Julie Matthaei (1996) was determined to develop an anti-oppression theoretical framework for economists. Although there are many axes of oppression in economics, Matthaei (1996) focuses her paper on guiding anti-classist (i.e. Marxism), feminist and anti-racist theories into a common theme for economic analysis. The objective of the author was to develop “a more inclusive, and more liberatory, understanding of our economy” (Matthaei, 1996, p.36). This clearly follows the rationale that we need to analyse the oppressive features of wealth accumulation in our economies, in order to solve the great social and environmental crises of our times. Moreover, the axes used by Matthaei (1996) provide a better understanding of wealth accumulation for an alternative and progressive heterodox economics pedagogy centered on the reality of the Canadian settler state.

Marxist Economics

For Karl Marx, the origin of capitalism was through primitive accumulation. In other words, the capitalist economy was born through the historical transformation of the means of production, which divorced the immediate producer from the product, to finally establish the wage labourer (Glassman, 2006, p.210). In his analysis, he saw this transformation as a “necessary step in the direction of fuller human development” (Glassman, 2006, p.611), entailing that human history follows one path. In fact, Marx was an “evolutionary optimist” (McLellan, 1992), since his work was influenced by

Darwin's theory of evolution (Marcy, 2009). Hence, it seems that the proletarian revolution becomes realizable after our civilization (although, mostly the people on the margins) suffered enough. Moreover, eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe perceived the world in progressive stages (also called conjectural history), but primarily used the "four-stages theory" to explain temporal and geographical differences between nations (Blaney et al., 2010; Stocking, 1977). The theory explains a consecutive four-stage development from hunting, then pasturage, then agriculture, and finally ending in a commercial society (Stocking, 1977). Moreover, based on Stocking (1977) it was during the Scottish Enlightenment that Adam Smith and Baron Turgot (early classical economists) invented the latter stadian theory. This particular ideology of how the world evolves is certainly still very common in neoclassical economics pedagogy, as economics textbooks describe growth and development as drivers of progress, innovation, higher utility for individuals, and increased wealth for nations. Not only is the discourse of non-European civilizations labelled around the "primal stage" concept within common neoclassical economics textbooks, but the ecological economics textbook of Daly et al. (2011) also describes hunting and gathering societies as the first stage in human civilization. The theory of developmental stages is still used as the original basis for neoclassical and ecological economics, undermining alternative and traditional ways of living, erasing non-European economic constructions from the economics pedagogy.

The Marxist scholar David Harvey (2004) later transformed the 'primitive accumulation' concept into 'accumulation by dispossession', which better reflects the past and present economic situation in America. The latter occurs in many ways, but is mostly omnipresent and "picks up strongly when crises of overaccumulation occur in expanded reproduction" (Harvey, 2004, p.76). It is noticeable within the practices of biopiracy, the enclosures of the commons, the commodification of nature, asset speculation, and other means of dispossession (Harvey, 2004). Harvey's term can be distinguished from Marx's "primitive accumulation" in terms of chronology. Karl Marx presents the "accumulation of capital" as a discrete occurrence, which transforms itself into a series of expanded reproduction, mainly through the exploitation of labour (Harvey, 2004). On the other hand, Harvey (2004, p.74) describes the continuous and persistent "predatory practices" of primitive accumulation.

Feminist Economics

The economics discipline is definitely a social construction. Just as many other sciences, it was constructed by a small group of individuals with certain privileges. Consequently, as feminist Dr. Luce Irigaray argues, even the words and logic used in a discipline can be pre-conditioned by the dominant gender engaged in the development of that “system of thought” (Olkowski, 2000). Hence, it becomes interesting to understand for whom and what society it was constructed for, and for whom it was not. For instance, feminist economics has challenged this androcentric academic body by re-centering gendered inequities into economics analysis. By ignoring the importance of gender, the economics discipline “speaks essentially of men’s experiences” (Matthaei, 2015, p.23). The feminist economist Mary Mellor (1997) argues that the construct of ‘economic man’ lies within classical and neoclassical economics. In short, ‘economic man’ is a theoretical abstraction that externalizes the biological functioning of humans and also marginalizes nature (Mellor, 1997). In other words, “the position of women and the natural world” are both treated “as external to male-dominated economic systems” (Mellor, 1997, p.131). For example, the influential feminist economist and former New Zealand Member of Parliament, Marilyn Waring (1989) depicts the many implications of not calculating the women’s unpaid work in the household and the greater community in the nation’s wealth (cited by Mellor, 1997). There is however the danger that “money payment for women’s work” would legitimize the patriarchal structures undermining and excluding women from society (Mellor, 1997, p.132). On the other hand, the valuation of women’s work in economic terms would demonstrate how economics fails to acknowledge that “women’s work forms the majority of work in society” (Waring, 1989, & Pietilä, 1987, both cited in Mellor, 1997, p.133). The debate certainly continues, but demonstrates the lack of recognition of gender and sex in economics.

In addition, we cannot forget the immense historical (and present) wealth accumulated by industrial nations on the back of women of colour and Indigenous women. More than one million Indigenous women in South and Central America were sterilized in the 1960s and 1970s, by the U.S. state-funded Agency for International Development (Hill, 2009). The same occurred in the U.S. to about 800’000 Indigenous women (Hill, 2009); 40-42% of childbearing age Indigenous women in the U.S. were sterilized by the Indian Health Service (Hill, 2009; Simoni et al., 2002). In sum, the reproductive rights of women of colour and Indigenous women were attacked by the State in order to reduce

their organizational (and revolutionary) power and because they “have no place in the schemes of capital” (Hill, 2009, p.55).

Canada also participated in the destruction of Indigenous lives through the “cultural genocide” of residential schools (TRC, 2015) and during the 1960s where the Canadian State took custody of around 20’000 children from Indigenous mothers (Philip, 2002; TRC, 2015). Indigenous activist Leanne Simpson describes this as “gender[ed] colonial violence” [...], “a primary tool and strategy on the part of the states to attack and remove our bodies from our homelands” (Ahmad, 2015, p.14). Moreover, between 1980 and 2012, 1’017 Indigenous women and girls were murdered in Canada – Indigenous women are four times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women in Canada – and 164 Aboriginal females were missing (Amnesty, 2014; RCMP, 2013). Economists cannot reject the fact that wealth accumulation occurs at the intersections of such acts of violence. This is not of the past. It is a continuous oppressive structure, which started about 500 years ago, but recently disguises itself through the ‘positive’ objectives of development and growth.

Anti-Racist Economics

To understand the history of America, it is to acknowledge that the “life of European settlers – and the class structure of their society – [...] was dependent upon a foundation of conquest, genocide, and enslavement” (Sakai, Chap. 2, 1989). Although there is no literature that specifically analyses the racist tendencies in the economics pedagogy, it is quite obvious that economics textbooks do not admit that wealth in the Americas was determined by the enslavement and dispossession of Indigenous people and black slaves.

All economists should be required to understand how the slave trade in the Americas explains the accumulation, production and distribution of wealth to this day. Although, the economics literature on slavery is plentiful, it mostly centers its analysis on efficiency, profitability and other market mechanisms, which is nonetheless unsurprising for neoclassical economics. For instance, Findlay (1990) produced a basic model that allegedly explains the U.S. slave trade economy, in the 18th century. Also, the economists Engerman and Fogel (1974) argued in *Time on the Cross* that slavery was profitable for

the Southern U.S. and that it was beneficial for African Americans⁶. Finally, Starobin (1970) analysed how the national political structure of the southern U.S. He argues that the private sector was not the only domain profiting from slavery. In fact, the state and federal agencies were also heavily dependent upon slavery, with the production and manning of early state and municipal infrastructures (Starobin, 1970). However, Starobin's (1970) conclusion that slavery would still have persisted, if it were not for the U.S. Civil War of 1860, was still premised on the principles of profit and efficiency.

To this day, Aboriginal people and People of Colour are disproportionately represented in prisons and in terms of unemployment. For instance, the incarceration rate for Aboriginal people in Canada is ten times higher than the national rate and their unemployment rate is about twice as high as the national rate (Gilmore, 2015). In the case of black males, while they represent 1.25% of Canada's population, they make up 9.2% of the federally incarcerated population in Canada (Brown, 2007, cited in Warde, 2012), a rise of 50% from 2000 (Crawford, 2011, cited in Warde, 2012). Unsurprisingly, the Maclean's magazine (Gilmore, 2015, para. 2) recently reported that Canada has a "far worse race problem than the United States". By removing and displacing the bodies of Aboriginal people and People of Colour from the land, white people can efficiently take advantage of what critical race theory calls racial privilege (Warde, 2012). The latter describes the advantage of white people having better access to the important resources in society, "by virtue of being a member of the dominate (sic.) group" (Warde, 2012, p.463). Maroto (2014) presents another component of the high determinacy of racial privilege for the accumulation of wealth.

Based on Maroto (2014), there is a significant negative link between incarceration and wealth. The latter research demonstrated that incarceration reduces the probability of home ownership in the U.S. (Maroto, 2014). Having a home is an important feature for anyone as it is the first step to "access better neighbourhoods and school systems, increase social networks", and own various social status goods (Keister, 2000 & Spilerman, 2000, cited in Maroto, 2014, p.211). The high rate of incarceration limits the wealth accumulation of People of Colour and Indigenous people. Additionally, Shapiro

⁶ Let us be clear that the statement produced by Engerman and Fogel (1974) was flawed (Haskell, 1975) and obviously an absurd fabrication, especially considering that about 15 million Afrikan slaves were forcefully relocated to the Americas to work in the mines, textile mills, factories, and plantations (Hill, 2009).

(2004) found that home ownership is the highest source of inequality in the U.S., mostly affecting African American families. Racism is also a structural economic issue that cannot be dismissed by economists as solely a social issue.

Although this section is a quick survey of anti-racist economics, we cannot forget the immense contributions of migrant workers, refugees and undocumented persons to the Canadian economy, and how wealth in Canada is heavily dependent on their political expendable 'non-citizen' status.

Finally, young Canadian economists need to understand how economics intersects with persistent racism. In his *Racist Economics* chapter, Justin Podur (2002) writes that most of the impacts of racism are transmitted through the economic system. In the case of Canada, economists also need to acknowledge in their historical analysis that Canada's sovereignty over Indigenous people and land is based on racism (Coulthard, 2014). Consequently, while feminist economists are critical of the 'economic man', anti-racist and intersectional feminist (or anti-oppression) economists should be preoccupied by the economics axioms developed around the 'economic white settler man'. The following paragraphs will provide a theoretical basis for radical economists to demonstrate that Canada's economy is based on a settler-colonial structure.

Settler-Colonial Economics

Just to be clear, this section is different than an economics analysis of colonialism. Instead of studying the economic effects of colonialism on nations, or post-colonial economics, economists need to construct their analysis around present settler-colonial politics. Therefore, I propose an economics theory that studies wealth accumulation and distribution through the settler-colonial political lens. First of all, I will describe settler-colonialism in the case of Canada. Finally, I argue that a theoretical and practical extension of the Staple Thesis can serve as a pedagogical basis to study settler-colonialism in economics. In this manner, economists can follow the accumulation and distribution (both by dispossession) of wealth from land-intensive industries.

Settler-Colonialism and Canada

Canada is a settler-colonial country. The country's political title is embedded within its colonial relationships with Aboriginal communities and the land. While the colonial mediums have become less "overtly coercive" (Coulthard, 2014, p.14), the colonial ends have not changed. All in all, the objective of the Canadian settler-colonial state, Glen Coulthard⁷ (2014, p.125) argues, is to continuously gain as much access to the territories of Indigenous people "for the purposes of state formation, settlement, and capitalist development". Hence, settler-colonialism never sleeps. It is "*territorially acquisitive in perpetuity*" (Coulthard, 2014, p.152) to pursue the "dissolution of native societies" and erect "a new colonial society on the expropriated land base" (Wolfe, 2006, p.388). Although the afore-provided description does not rightly explain the complexities of settler-colonialism, it is sufficient to serve as the foundation of the following *settler-colonial staple thesis*.

A Settler-Colonial Staple Thesis: Rationale

I believe that reestablishing the colonial relation of dispossession as a co-foundational feature of our understanding of and critical engagement with capitalism opens up the possibility of developing a more ecologically attentive critique of colonial-capitalist accumulation (Coulthard, 2014, p.14).

In the 1960s, Melville Watkins used Harrold Innis' staple thesis to explain economic growth in Canada. In short, the original staple thesis of Innis described the "successive waves" of staple goods in Canada (Stanford, 2014, p.5). Watkins then extended Innis' analysis to produce a staple theory of economic growth in Canada, which claimed, "staple exports are the leading sector of the economy and set the pace for economic growth" (Watkins, 1963, p.144). He stretches, the economist, Albert Hirschman's (1958) three separate linkage effects between the staple industry and the economy's growth: backward, forward and final demand linkage (Watkins, 1963, p.145). These linkage effects are described Watkins (1963, p.145) as measurements of the "inducement to domestic investment" from an expansion in the staple sector.

⁷ Glen Coulthard is an Indigenous scholar and a professor at the University of British Columbia.

To be clear, Watkins' theory was developed in order to understand how an export-led economy, with a dominant commodity (staple good), affects the pattern of economic growth in Canada. Hence, it would seem out-of-place to recycle the previous ideas into an alternative framework. However, Watkins himself wrote in 2007, "there is an urgent need for an ecological history of staples as a way of illuminating the rapacious character of the Canadian variant of capitalism with its bias towards resource exploitation" (Watkins, 2007, p.220). How can the staple thesis illustrate the ecological and socio-economic impacts from industrial resource extraction?

While Melville Watkins demonstrated the dominance of the staple-export sector, Bill Rees called the expansion of the Tar Sands as cementing "Canada's reputation as an exporter of climate change" (Burrows, 2012). This path can be documented in many fashions. What I propose is an anti-colonial approach that analyses the trajectories of exported "virtual land" from industries. In other words, the extension of the staple thesis, through ecological footprint accounting, can illustrate how much land is used from all the ecological linkage effects of the Tar Sands.

The anti-colonial perspective is at play here since what is excessively exported by the staple industry is *wealth*; "wealth [being] land, Native land" (Tuck et al., 2012, p.24). An anti-colonial stance then confronts the legitimacy of land ownership, or property rights, in Canada. The settler-colonial staple thesis then starts from the assumption that all land in Canada is Aboriginal land. In other words, this methodology defies and rejects the view that land was ceded to the Crown or the State. Additionally, it confronts an obsolete, but still persistent, assumption in classical economics. Adam Smith regarded property to only have its "occasion" when it is occupied (Blaney et al., 2010, p.39). Hence, this worldview encourages settlers to view unoccupied land as *Terra Nullius*, as empty land, displacing Indigenous communities from their livelihoods, their land.

A Settler-Colonial Staple Thesis: Proposed Methodology

I apply a modified version of the Staple Thesis in order to analyse the different dimensional environmental impacts of the Tar Sands. The latter will be done through Melville Watkins' three linkage effects⁸ (1963), an end-demand and distributional linkage

⁸ These linkage effects are an extension of Albert Hirschman's (1958) earlier work.

effect. These linkages provide a complete picture of how the Tar Sands expands itself through its extraction, production and distribution practices.

My proposed methodology for a settler-colonial staples theory, on the Tar Sands industry, parallels the aforementioned linkages. However, my ecological linkage effects will not follow the growth perspective of Watkins and Hirschman. Hence, I use their terminologies and arrangements, but I have adjusted the direction of the linkage effects and added their relevant determinants. This method will illustrate the (damaging) dominance of the Tar Sands in the environment, through multiple dimensions.

Before we proceed with the list of ecological linkage effects, some definitions are in order. Back when Harrold Innis wrote about staples, his work was on the Canadian fishing and fur industry and their preeminence in the export sector. To stay with theoretical tradition, I will also use ‘staple(s)’ as the term that identifies the analysed commodity in this paper. The commodity considered in this paper is the bitumen (a tar-like substance) extracted in Alberta, Canada, which is a staple commodity for the energy sector. Throughout this paper, I refer to this industry as the ‘Tar Sands’ instead of ‘Oil Sands’, since bitumen is only transformed into oil after heavy refining.

Five Ecological Linkages

1. Backward ecological linkage: a measure of the local ecological impacts around and during the (domestic) extraction of the staples.
 - a. Determinants: Water contamination; Air pollution; Refurbishment of polluted/damaged land.
2. Forward ecological linkage: measure of the ecological impacts from the other industries using the output of the staple-export industry as an input.
 - a. Determinants: Petroleum and durable goods transformation.
3. Final demand ecological linkage: measure of the ecological impacts in the production of goods/services for factors in the staple-export sector.
 - a. Determinants: Capital production and natural resources.

Moreover, I also include two supplementary linkage effects:

4. End-demand ecological linkage: a measure of ecological impacts in the consumption of the (refined and processed) staple, and the decomposition of its unusable state.
 - Determinants: Canadian and international consumption of the staple.
5. Distributional ecological linkage: measure of ecological impacts in the distribution of the staples.
 - Determinants: Transportation pollution and accidents.

Finally, the determinants are not to be regarded as fixed, but act as a guidance to include more factors that better characterise these linkage effects.

Table 1, in the appendix, illustrates the relationships between the Tar Sands industry and other industries, consumers and the land (the environment). The arrows indicate the direction of the ecological linkage effects.

With an input-output (IO) matrix we can observe all trades between the Tar Sands, other industries and final demand⁹. Subsequently, ecological footprints will be used to quantify the exchanges between the economic actors, in ecological terms. The input and output exchanges can be depicted through an environmental extension of the IO matrix (Barrett et al., 2006). The ecological footprint can also be separated into two other categories: “Production land” would calculate how much land is required for the extraction of the staple industry (and further processes) and “Carbon uptake land” would calculate the “biocapacity required to sequester the emission” of pollution (Chavez et al, 2010). In other words, this methodology calculates how much ecological footprint (i.e. land) is apportioned to each ecological linkage effect. Finally, with the input-output matrix and the ecological footprint of the relevant linkage effects, we can measure and follow the appropriation and destruction of Indigenous land in Alberta, and across Canada. Moreover, this will help understand how much of the Canadian ecological footprint is from this staple industry and how much Indigenous land is supporting the Tar Sands industry. The input-output matrix is illustrated in the appendix (Table 2).

⁹ For simplicity, “final demand” includes citizens. We assume citizens can either be consumers or non-consumers of certain industries, but citizens are at least a consumer of one industry.

In Canada, about 89% of land is Crown land, where “the authority for [its] control [...] rests with the Crown”, while 11% is private lands¹⁰. Furthermore, Crown land can also be subdivided into Aboriginal titles (comprehensive and specific claims), reserves, and treaty land. The differences between the latter mentioned land categories are important to break down in this methodology. In this manner, we can identify which type of land is the most impacted by the ecological linkage effects of the Tar Sands industry. Also, we can then clearly determine if there is a pattern between the types of land and their respective linkage effects. However, since the distinctions between each category of land are not very clear, and still disputed, this particular analysis needs to employ a political and historical perspective as well. In the appendix a list of references (Table 4) has been developed to search for the information relating to land in Canada.

There are still several gaps in this methodology. These deserve attention and adjustments. First of all, there are no fully developed databases to describe the linkage effects of the Tar Sands as ecological footprints. However, table 3 (in the appendix) lists appropriate methodologies for the development of such. Secondly, although these methodologies can clearly identify the ecological linkage effects, they are not measured with the same units. Hence, the next phase for this methodology is to produce a consistent measurement unit to indicate the quantity of land mass apportioned for the Tar Sands industry. Finally, the ecological footprint methodology cannot take the intensity of extraction and the decline in land biocapacity into account (Fiala, 2008). Although these limitations restrict the possibility of a comprehensive account of land appropriation from the Tar Sands, the scope of this methodology only pays attention to “physical space”. To correct for this I assume that all land affected by the ecological linkage effect cannot be refurbished, and is lost for present and near-future generations. Furthermore, the pedagogical application of this theory can serve to educate the young economist to understand the links between the economy, the environment, and society, particularly the marginalized populations.

¹⁰ From <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/en/article/crown-land/>

Discussion

Neo-Liberal Pedagogy

Although there is a limited amount of research, we can conclude that economics pedagogy in Canada oscillates between the two extremes of a mixed economy: capitalism and socialism (Brooks et al., 1991; Green, 2012). In reality, economics students are taught to reproduce a neo-liberal economy. Simply put, liberalism is the push to allow every part of the socio-economic spheres to be solely guided by “the ideals of personal freedom and possessive individualism” (Robertson, 2008, p.13), by undisturbed market relations, by the invisible hand. The *neo* extension depicts the State’s involvement in assuring and encouraging “the freedom of the market, the free right to trade, the right to choose”, and the right to private property (Robertson, 2008, p.13). The normalized homogeneity of how society functions then legitimizes the State and wealth/capital owners to sleep together and regulate everything on their own terms, for their own benefits. In Canada, neoliberalism has entered the public education as well, consequently influencing our public institutions (Fisher et al., 2009). We cannot have neo-liberal minded economists participating in and guiding the decision-making processes of our nations and communities. What we require instead are revolutionary political ideas and actions to rejuvenate our relationships to the land and to each other.

Therefore, the study of settler-colonialism in economics can teach students how to resist and hopefully dismantle the neo-liberal agenda interfering with their education. As described earlier, the proposed extension of the Staple Thesis can serve as a component in a settler-colonial economics curriculum. It not only continues the tradition of depicting how staples have transformed Canadian society, but also how the staple (extractive) industry drives Canada as a land-intensive economy founded on a settler-colonial trajectory. Chief Terrance Nelson¹¹ said it best, “This is our wealth. The oil did not come on little wooden boats from Europe. It was here already” (quoted in Gallagher, 2011, p.165). Settler-colonialism adds a variety of alternative and relevant topics for economics students to study.

¹¹ Chief Terrance Nelson: “Former Chief of Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation, serving eight and half years as Chief”, from <http://scoinc.mb.ca/grandchief/>

Envisioning Aspects of Settler-Colonial Economics Pedagogy

It should not be surprising that the most inspiring market-capitalist scholar denied other types of economic relationships. Indeed, Adam Smith considered Indigenous modes of production as outmoded (Vimalassery, 2013). How can economics students understand the implications of settler-colonialism in Canadian economics? While my essay only investigated the discussions on wealth in economics textbooks, Dr. Manu Vimalassery¹² (2013) provides other insightful and foundational components to teach and study settler-colonialism within economics pedagogy. For instance, he provides great insight as to the questions of wealth distribution, land rent and the division of labour. Additionally, one very important issue that should be raised at the start of an economics classroom is the “natural produce” of land (Vimalassery, 2013). The latter values the unimaginable amount of years of “Indigenous works and relations with a particular place” (Vimalassery, 2013, p.300). Finally, even though the economics discipline absolutely needs re-grounding, “any strategy geared toward authentic decolonization must directly confront more than economic relations” (Coulthard, 2014, p.14). Economics is certainly important, but economic reductionism has its limits.

¹² Manu Vimalassery is a history professor, focusing on imperialism and capitalism. He explains how Adam Smith tried to justify the “operational logic of capital accumulation on a world scale”, constantly repeating “the conquest of the Americas” (Vimalassery, 2013, p.295).

Appendix
(Table 1)

SETTLER-COLONIAL STAPLES THEORY	Ecological Linkage Effects	Other industries	Final Demand	The Land Environment
Tar Sands Industry	Backward			↑
	Forward	↑		
	Final demand	←		
	End demand		↑	
	Distributional		↑	↑

Tar Sands Linkage Effects
Relationships

* Other industries receive the output of the Tar Sands and provide input for the Tar Sands as well. Final demand englobes the economic and political actors (i.e. consumers and citizens) who consume the refined bitumen, but can also be directly affected by distributional pollution and accidents. The land is the production factor that provides the possibility for the extraction of the bitumen. Consequently, the land absorbs the direct damaging transformations. It will also be directly affected by distributional accidents.

(Table 2)
Ecological Staples Theory
Ecological Footprint Input-Output Matrix

ECONOMIC ACTORS	Tar Sands	Industry A	Industry B	Final demand	The Land	Total
Tar Sands						
Industry A						
Industry B						
Final demand						
The Land						
Total						<i>Has to balance</i>

(Table 3)
Ecological Linkage Effects: Methodologies

Ecological Linkage Effects	Methodologies
Backward	Giljum et al. (2012) discuss about the Product Environmental Footprint (PEF). It calculates the environmental impacts of the resource extraction.
Forward	The FoE/SERI indicator ¹³ , which supplements PEF, is “oriented towards inputs of natural resources over the global supply chain” (Giljum et al., 2012, 10).
Final demand	Freire et al. (2014) and Solís et al. (2013) provide ecological footprint methods for the construction industry in Spain, which is relevant to measure the ecological footprint of capital inputs in the Tar Sands.
End demand	Kissinger et al. (2013) looks at how to account for the ecological footprint of cities. The ecological footprint from the Tar Sands consumption can be decoupled for every city.
Distributional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good starting point for this linkage effect is to decouple the ecological footprint measure of Tar Sand oil transportation (e.g. trains, trucks, boats, and pipelines) in ecological footprint databases. • The other component relates to the probability of an accident during the transportation multiplied by the ecological footprint of the accident. The “Ecological Footprint-likelihood” measurement can be a gauge determinant of the effects on final demand (i.e. people). For instance, what type of land (Table 4) has the highest “Ecological footprint-likelihood”? • This ecological effect can also be depicted by the amount of space (Km^2) apportioned by the transportation.

¹³ Friends of the Earth/Sustainable Europe Research Institute indicator

(Table 4)
References for Types of Land in Canada

Types of Land in Canada	References
Aboriginal claims	AANDC (2010a) has an online page describing and listing the comprehensive and specific land claims in Canada. The Land Claims Agreements Coalition (n.d.) also provides a map of the comprehensive land claims in Canada.
Aboriginal titles	Kent McNeil (2000 & 2011) and Hamilton (2014) describe what Aboriginal titles are in Canada.
Treaties	AANDC (2010b) provides maps, descriptions and the original texts of the treaties in Canada. Additionally, www.Native-Land.ca produced an interactive online resource where anyone can identify the respective Aboriginal territory, treaty, and language associated with their location.
Indian reserves	DNRC (1992) developed an articulated map of Canada in which Indian reserves are clearly located. Additionally, AANDC (n.d.) has a search engine for all the reserves in Canada.

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